

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ORTOLI SEEKS A MORE POSITIVE ROLE FOR THE EC COMMISSION
IN THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

1. SUMMARY. EC COMMISSION PRESIDENT ORTOLI, RECENTLY REAPPOINTED FOR A NEW TWO-YEAR TERM, HELD A WELL ATTENDED PRESS CONFERENCE ON JANUARY 10 AT WHICH HE SAID THE COMMISSION "IS DETERMINED TO TAKE UP ONCE MORE ITS INITIATING ROLE IN THE PROCESS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION." ORTOLI'S PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWED A DAY LONG DEBATE AMONG MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE EC AND ROLE THE COMMISSION SHOULD PLAY. ORTOLI CALLED UPON EUROPE TO TAKE EMERGENCY ACTIONS TO REDUCE ITS DEPENDENCE ON EXTERNAL SOURCES OF ENERGY, IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH THE THIRD WORLD, AMELIORATE THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS, RESOLVE THE ISSUE OF CONTINUED UK MEMBERSHIP, AND TO COMPLETE THE "INVENTORY" OF THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY. HE ALSO REAFFIRMED THE GOAL OF ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION WHILE RECOGNIZING FAILURE OF ATTEMPTS TO DATE. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JANUARY 9, THE EC COMMISSION HELD A DAY-LONG MEETING ON THE GENERAL POLITICAL SITUATION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. COMMISSION PRESIDENT ORTOLI HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE ON JANUARY
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10 AT WHICH HE SAID THE COMMUNITY HAD BEEN "FACED WITH THE ABSENCE

OF POLITICAL WILL OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS" AND THAT THE EC COMMISSION HAD NOW DECIDED "TO ADOPT A POLITICAL ROLE FOR THE GOOD OF EUROPE."

ORTOLI SAID THE COMMISSIN "INTENDS ENERGETICALLY TO EXERCISE ITS RIGHT OF INITIATIVE," BOTH WITHIN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND AT THE SUMMIT LEVEL.

3. ORTOLI SAID THERE SHOULD BE NO ILLUSIONS WITH REGARD TO 1974. THE YEAR WAS MARKED BY A SETBACK TO EUROPE'S ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL INDEPENDENCE RESULTING FROM THE UPHEAVAL OF THE WORLD'S ECONOMIES BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE OIL CRISIS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SIMILAR DIFFICULTIRES WITH OTHER RAW MATERIALS. ORTOLI SAID THAT EUROPE'S EFFORTS TOWARD SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE HAD FAILED LAMENTABLY AND THAT EUROPE WAS NOW A MERE SPECTATOR IN WORLD AFFAIRS WHOSE WEIGHT IS NONEXISTENT, OR WEAK, OR INADEQUATE. LACK OF BALANCE IN RELATION TO THE U.S. IS EUROPE'S OWN FAULT AND THE U.S. IS NOT TO BLAME.

4. IN AN EFFORT TO MOVE EUROPE AHEAD AGAIN, ORTOLI SAID THE COMMISSION HAS WORKED OUT AN OVERALL PLAN OF ACTION WHICH WILL SOON BE PRESENTED TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. AMONG THE MOST URGENT TASKS FACING THE COMMUNITY IS THE NEED TO MOBILIZE ANDDEVELOP COMMUNITY ENERGY RESOURCES SO AS TO REDUCE THE EC'S DEPENDENCE ON THE OUTSIDE WORKD. IN ADDITION, ORTOLI'S ACTION PROGRAM CALLS FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH THE THIRD WORLD, AND URGES GREATER EFFORTS TO AMELIORATE THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS. THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF UK RENEGOTIATION AND THE "INVENTORY/ OF THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY ARE ALSO TO BE DEALT WITH ON A PRIORITY BASIS.

5. ORTOLI SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO BE ABLE TO REPORT UNANIMITY WITHIN THE COMMISSION ON THE NECESSITY "TO ORIENT THE COMMUNITY TOWARD MORE COHERENT STRUCTURES AND TO WORK TOWARD ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION, AND EUROPEAN UNION." ORTOLI WELCOMED THE DECISION OF THE PARIS SUMMIT TO SET UP "EUROPEAN COUNCILS" AND HOPED THAT THEY WOULD PROVE TO BE AN EFFICIENT INSTRUMENT FOR DECISION MAKING. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THE RISK THAT THESE COUNCILS COULD LEAD TO GREATER RELIANCE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH, HE SAID, WOULD RUN COUNTER TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF EUROPE.

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6. ON THE SUBJECT OF ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION, ORTOLI SAID IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE CONCEPT OF EFFECTING THIS UNION BY STAGES HAD FAILED. HE SAID EUROPE "MUST HAVE A CLEAR VIEW OF THE FINALITIES AND OF THE INSTRUMENTS WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE DEVELOPED IN ORDER TO ATTAIN THESE AIMS." ORTLI SAID THECOMMISSION WILL CONTINUE WORK ON THE CONCEPT OF EUROPEAN UNION, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLAMENT AND COOPERATING

FULLY WITH BELGIAN PRIME MINISTER TINDEMANS.GREENWALD

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